DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 235 362 CE 037 234

TITLE	Management of the Haitian American Training Institute in Relationship of Industrial and Human Service Methodologies.
INSTITUTION	Center for Human Services, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	17 Nov 81
NOTE	13p.; Prepared for the National Workshop/Conference for Refugee and Immigrant Project Directors (Washington, DC, November 17, 1981) by the Haitian American Training Institute.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Counseling Services; Day Care; Educational Facilities; *Haitians; *Human Services; *Immigrants; *Job Training; Migrant Workers; Motivation Techniques; *Program Administration; Program Effectiveness; Program Implementation; *Refugees; Student Recruitment; Transportation
IDENTIFIERS	*Haitian American Training Institute

ABSTRACT

The contract for the Haitian American Training Institute was awarded to the Center for Human Services of Washington, D.C. on April 1, 1981. By June 1981, the institute had an enrollment of over 1,200 Haitian refugees in 45 classes with 50 instructors. The unprecedented rapid start-up of this human services program and the success of the project are chiefly due to the extensive trilingual recruiting methods that were conducted in the Washington D.C. area, on the Delmarva peninsula, and in New York City. Despite the fact that project staff in New York City were able to arrange institute bus routes to transport students, transportation continues to be s significant problem and expense on the Delmarva peninsula and to date no solutions have been devised to decrease it. To reduce operating expenses, the immigrants themselves paint and maintain project facilities whenever possible and are encouraged to bring their young children to class. Because they tend to be viewed as neutral parties, project staff have been able to extend the scope of their counseling services to include efforts to improve migrant worker living conditions. The institute program has not only improved the Haitians' language skills but has also enhanced their physical existence and social lives. (MN)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

HATI
Haitian American
Training Institute

HATI MAIN HEADQUARTERS
Haitian American Training Institute
872 A Flatbush Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11226
(212) 282-3300
Contact: James J. Dohl

BROOKLYN COORDINATING CENTER
Charlemagne Pe Ralte Center
333 Lincoln Place
Brooklyn, New York 11238
(212) 638-7000
Contact: Joseph Etienne

QUEENS COORDINATING CENTER
Haitian Americans United for Progress
221-05 Linden Boulevard
Cambria Heights, New York 11411
(212) 527-3776
Contact: Rev Guy Sansaricq

MANHATTAN COORDINATING CENTER
Haitian Neighborhood Service
Center, Inc.
2465 Broadway
New York, New York 10025
(212) 595-4040
Contact: Jean Dupuy

MIGRANT COORDINATING CENTER
207 Broad Street
Salisbury, Maryland 21801
(301) 546-3390
Contact: Burke Dorworth

ED235362

MANAGEMENT OF THE HAITIAN AMERICAN TRAINING INSTITUTE IN RELATIONSHIP OF INDUSTRIAL AND HUMAN SERVICE METHODOLOGIES

PREPARED FOR:

NATIONAL WORKSHOP/CONFERENCE FOR REFUGEE
AND IMMIGRANT PROJECT DIRECTORS
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, D.C.

NOVEMBER 17, 1981

SUBMITTED BY:

THE HAITIAN AMERICAN TRAINING INSTITUTE
A contract administered by
The Center for Human Services
of Washington, D.C.

CE037234

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

N Smith

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

MANAGEMENT OF THE HAITIAN AMERICAN TRAINING INSTITUTE IN RELATIONSHIP OF INDUSTRIAL AND HUMAN SERVICE METHODOLOGIES

On April 1, 1981, we at the Center for Human Services received our contract. By June, only 30 days after recruitment began, we had over 1,200 Haitian refugees enrolled in 45 classes with 50 instructors. Since that time a few students have "graduated," some have moved out of the area to improve their job situation and a few have dropped out. The migrant program, after operation of 120 days, has now been depleted for the winter period. Over 900 students are still in the program and the vast majority of students are making substantial progress as measured by their examinations. This paper describes the management methods by which we achieved this unprecedented rapid start-up of a human service program, and the tremendous success we have had with it thus far. It also describes the problems and difficulties we have had as well as the monumental problems that presently face us.

We will begin with our most serious problem. It is our inability to provide service to a community after increasing expectation level. At this moment, we do not have one single vacancy for one more Haitian refugee. We literally have hundreds of refugees who have been turned away. We have recommended and suggested other programs but these have been either non-existant, too slow to get started, not presently taking new enrollees, or like outselves, full. This "waiting list" does not include the approximately 5 percent of the applicants who we did not admit because their skills were really sufficiently advanced that they needed vocational training and/or GED or some other type of high school or equivalency program. This latter group has been successfully referred. We have instructors available, classroom space, and the administrative mechanism to double the size of our program. We could easily do this within another 30-day period. And even if we did, our estimate is we would still only be reaching approximately half of the number of Haitian refugees who are desirous of improving their English and making their way in their new adopted land. We do not have the funds however.

As the purpose of this meeting is to concentrate on technical problems and solutions, we will not dwell on our overwhelming difficulty and instead concentrate upon the minor ones which for the most part are more easily susceptible to solution.

By way of introduction let me briefly describe our management of the project which is relatively unique. What we have tried to accomplish--is to achieve the best elements of both traditional corporate industrial management and human service delivery without also carrying the baggage of the traditional weaknesses of both. As such we organized the project along corporate industrial lines with a type of line responsibility which is rarely seen in human service delivery programs. However, we did it with people who are deeply committed to the population we serve and known and trusted by them. There is an adage in business that "the customer is always right" and taking this corporate approach to the project together with the commitment of the staff to the population to be served, we were able to implement this.

Recruiting

In early May, a young Haitian couple and their 10 year old son were riding on the New York City subway from Manhattan to Brooklyn. The man had just had an employment interview in Manhattan and was hopeful of landing a job. His wife and son had gone along and waited outside the building in which the interview took place to supply familial support so typical of the Haitian community. They were discussing the prospect of the job in Creole and were observed by Jean Dupuy, who overheard part of their conservation. He immediately introduced himself as an ESL Director, ascertained the fact that they were refugees, determined that they had very poor English speaking skills, proceeded to take out his enrollment papers and initiated a process by which two more students were enrolled for our English classes. While only a small percentage of the recruitment was done in the subways of New York, this incident typifies the approach that was taken to recruitment in our project. Namely that recruitment was a line responsibility for everybody to do directly. If other organizations and institutions could be helpful, so much the better, but the responsibility for direct recruitment was with the line people on the project. We did not have a staff unit that was

responsible for recruitment that was somehow separate from the unit that would be responsible for providing the training. Nor did we rely on other institutions to provide students, trainees, and referrals. We had set a target of recruiting 1,200 students in 30 days. Our needs assessment had shown that there were far more than 1,200 Haitian refugees in our target areas that would meet the criteria so the only problem was finding them and recruiting them. We reasoned that if one person did nothing else but recruit Haitians in the Haitian neighborhoods he could certainly recruit one person per hour or eight people in a day. Anyone that could not, clearly didn't know the Haitian community and was not perceived to be a part of it. As it turned out, we did not have to resort to total direct recruiting as other mechanisms also brought in large numbers; but we were prepared to do that. The most important characteristic of the recruiters is that they all spoke Creole and they all knew the Haitian community in our program areas intimately.

In addition to the direct methods the following indirect methodologies were utilized.

- Trilingual Notices (English, French, and Creole) were produced and posted throughout the neighborhood. We emphasized the importance of all three languages. If Creole did not appear many prospective people could not read the notices and the absence of Creole would be negatively interpreted by many subgroups. French was important in that it is the Haitian language of education and in its absence a poor quality image would be conveyed.

- Letters were written and notices provided to various Haitian owned businesses and establishments patronized by Haitians. Two of the most active recruiters turned out to be a Haitian beauty parlor and a Haitian food store.

- The churches were extremely helpful in the recruiting. For example, at the Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church in Cambria Heights, Father Sansaricq made announcements in Creole at Mass. The announcements tended to be of an advisory nature as opposed to simply community information.

- The radio station at Columbia University has a program one hour per week catering to the Haitian community in New York. It is avidly listened to and announcements were made on the radio.

Recruiting in the New York City area turned out to be no problem whatsoever. The total out-of-pocket expenditure was $17.00 for the printing of leaflets and the postage for the letters that were mailed to businesses and organizations. The vast majority of all the students came through word of mouth. Each Haitian student that was recruited was asked to recruit others. After the initial experiences with the project the attitude was sufficiently positive that large numbers of students did engage in the recruiting and as a result, we have the incredible excess demand for services that we face today. At present, students persist in bringing a friend to class, directly avoiding registration and a refusal.

Part of our project included serving Haitian migrant workers in the Delmarva Peninsula which is an area of Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia best known for its migrant farms, production of chickens, and seafood. Unlike the New York City situation where we knew for certain that there were large numbers of Haitians who met the appropriate definitions for the project, we did not have the same level of certainty regarding the Delmarva Peninsula. In the previous spring and summer there were approximately 50-75 Haitian migrant workers in labor camps. However, the "word" throughout the migrant worker stream was that the Haitians were such good workers last year, that all the crew chiefs were instructed to bring in more Haitians. Since there were many more Haitian refugees in Florida, it was a reasonable assumption that there would be a substantial increase in the Haitians reaching the Delmarva Peninsula. While the recruiting that was done in the New York area was done mostly by Haitian-Americans who spoke Creole and knew the culture, we simply did not have the large number of Haitian recruiters available to us in the Delmarva Peninsula. There were no Haitian centers and no Haitian churches. Basically, however, we monitored the migrant stream until we knew that the Haitians had hit the Carolinas. Traditionally, the migrant worker stream moves from Florida north and workers often stay with the entire stream ending with picking potatoes in Long Island or applies in New England. By determing the number of Haitians working the Carolinas, we were able to get a

fairly good estimate of the number that were likely come to pick in the Delmarva Peninsula next. By keeping in touch with the growers and the crew chiefs, we knew exactly when they would arrive. Recruiting migrant workers for any type of social program has been notoriously difficult in that the camps are controlled by the growers and, to a great extent, they can (legally or not) control access to and egress from those camps. The growers are particularly concerned with anything resembling government intervention which from their point of view sets standards which they find it expensive to meet (regardless of how desirable or just) or tend to organize or support organization of the workers. The growers therefore tend to be particularly hostile to union organizers and/or government officials of any kind. A key element in our recruitment efforts was the approaching of the growers before the Haitians ever reached the camps. We made clear that we were not part of the government, and our interest was solely in providing English language instruction. By having the project staff spend this advanced time with the growers we had free access to every camp when the Haitians arrived and throughout the period of the harvest season. Although no one would have predicted it, least of all us, we did not have one instance of obstructionism on the part of any of the growers and indeed many were most helpful. Again, church relationships turned out to be very important. Father Kelly and Sister Joan had the previous summer provided for the spiritual needs of the Haitians. They were immensely helpful with the growers and directly with other Haitians and helped by making announcements in their churches. Basically, however, our own staff went directly to the camps as the Haitians arrived and we recruited them very quickly. What we tried to create was an atmosphere in which every Haitian who didn't speak English very well went to classes. Thus in some camps we had 100 percent recruitment efforts. There was great skepticism on the part of many that adults who would labor in the hot sun for eight to ten hours a day doing stoop labor would have the energy and willingness to go to English classes for two hours per night four nights a week. While we would like to take the credit for the recruitment that produced 350 students in approximately three weeks of effort, we must observe that this success was due much more to the energy, industry, and cultural tradition of the Haitians and their amazingly intense desire to make almost any sacrifice to succeed in this country. We should emphasize that just as the recruiters in New York for the most part were Creole speaking and themselves Black and Haitian, in the Delmarva Peninsula most

of our recruiters were the same. There were few staff members who were Creole speaking to help with the groups of Haitians, but often crew chiefs, and in almost all groups there was one Haitian who spoke English better than the others, ended up being the spokesperson. We could usually get him to recruit the rest of our students.

In this discussion of recruiting, it is probably useful to articulate something that we did not do. Specifically, we did not make elaborate arrangements or institutional linkages with many of the existing social service institutions in the area. We had done an informal intuitive cost-benefit analysis and had come to the conclusion that in the time it would take to introduce our project to an institution (say the local employment service office) and then explain the assistance we needed, exchange the appropriate documents, allow for an institutional decision on the part of the agency, that it was probably easier to just go out and recruit people ourselves. This is a reflection of the more common industrial approach where "make or buy" decisions get made on a variety of subjects. In most human service programs there is a strong bias in favor of coordinating with other human service delivery organizations regardless of whether or not the overhead for the coordination can be justified in terms of the increased efficiency and yield of the results. In this case we were able to recruit all the students we could possibly service in less time than it would take to get favorable responses from most of the individuals or organizations we might have coordinated with. This is not to say we avoided "touching base" with other organizations. We did. However, the difference is that we did not rely upon those organizations to furnish clients for our program.

Transportation

Transportation continues to be our single most operational problem. While we did anticipate this problem in the Delmarva Peninsula, we expected that New York City with its network of public transportation would not require much in the way of project transportation logistics. However, despite the fact that we have decentralized our classes within New York City to six different sites this is one area that remains a severe problem. In the Borough of Queens-Cambria Heights section, there are no subways and bus schedules are infrequent.

Students would have to leave work and sometimes travel on a subway, transferring to a bus or two to arrive at classes and then have a two or three leg return home. Often more time was spent going to and from class than in class. In addition, the multiple legs of the trip increased the cost. Initially we provided subway and bus tokens to students to reimburse them for transportation. We found that the cost of this mode of transportation was substantial and far in excess of what we had anticipated. Our staff came up with an innovative solution which unfortunately is a sad commentary on the state of municipal transportation in the urban areas of America. We found that it was actually cheaper to establish our own bus route. We contracted with a Haitian businessman who owned a bus and designated a number of locations in the Borough of Queens as pick-up and drop-off sites. We worked out a schedule and distributed it to all students. Our bus is almost always on time and it picks up and drops off students according to the prearranged schedule. As a result we have not only saved money but significantly decreased the amount of time students spend in traveling. In addition, the conviviality of the group of students and the opportunity of their being together with a common goal allows for the practice of English and constructive activities on the bus. Ironically, this is not unlike some of the positive uses made on rural school buses by public schools throughout the country.

On the Delmarva Peninsula the cost of transportation between the various migrant camps to the classrooms continues to be a significant expense. It was anticipated, and we have developed no unique solutions for decreasing it.

Project Identification

In our original planning, we designed an identification card which we provided to every student upon enrollment. It was our feeling that this form of official identification would have a high motivational affect upon the students. Reality later showed that our notion was more than supported. Indeed given that the students were all recent refugees in most cases our identification card was the only piece of official identification they had. We found that our I.D. card was being used for everything from check cashing identification to presenting identification to get into certain office buildings where there was GSA or equivalent guide. In one instance a migrant who had been in one of our programs

and moved on the migrant stream all the way up to the Buffalo, New York area was apparently stranded without funds or friends and on the basis of his project identification card we were called in New York and managed to arrange by telephone for a local priest to provide assistance.

Facilities

In the New York area, our facilities at first glance leave much to be desired. On 92nd Street and Broadway in Manhattan, there is a large supermarket and above the supermarket is a 24-hour a day bingo hall. But above the bingo hall on the third floor is the Haitian Neighborhood Service Center and eight classrooms. The classrooms are small and lack acoustical privacy in that they are divided by 10 foot high partition in a 16 foot high loft. We had made a deliberate decision to use these seemingly second-rate facilities rather than arrange for borrowed classroom space in many of the available public schools in the neighborhood. The reason unfortunately is that by the time one gets permission of the school board, reimburses the janitor who must lock up the building and stay there at night, pays for whatever additional heating and utility costs there are, it turns out to be far more expensive than using the non-public facilities. Secondly, the arrangements were much easier to make and we had people in classrooms 60 days after receiving the contract. We even saved time and money in the painting of the classrooms by having Haitian students do it themselves. In the Borough of Brooklyn, we rented classroom space from a pre-school and a community organization very inexpensively and this has proven to be extremely adequate. Our Queens program utilizes two parochial schools at a nominal rental. In the Delmarva Peninsula, we were able to make arrangements to utilize public school classrooms without the complexities and costs that are entailed in the large cities. This to us was very illustrative of the complexity of running human service programs in this country. What is cost-effective and/or reasonable in one location may be totally absurd in another simply due to different mores, laws, union regulations and the like.

Child Care

As we indicated earlier, the classes for the migrants in the Delmarva Peninsula were held in school buildings which we had arranged for. The first of

these had us scheduled for a classroom that had evidently been some sort of day care center and had cribs in it. Without giving it much thought the migrant students brought their infants to the next class and put them in the cribs during the session. The staff thought this was an excellent solution to part of the day care problem, and out of this serendipitous happening a policy was born. We now permit and encourage students to bring their children to class. Many of the children sit through the classes and participate. All but the infants can also profit from the English instruction and the young children and their parents can then practice at home together. Haitian immigrant children tend to be extremely well behaved and usually appear to be as interested in the material as their parents. In those cases where the children are simply too young for the classes, too tired, or occasionally not interested, one of the teenage children is usually given the responsibility for baby-sitting the rest in another classroom. Thus for the most part we have utilized group child care at the classroom sites and have even minimized this by having children participate in the instruction itself.

While this practice of having children in the same classrooms as their parents has raised a number of questions for outsiders looking at our program, we can only report it has worked very well with Haitian immigrants. There does not seem to be a great deal of discomfort or concern about the notion of parents making errors in class in front of their children. The familial bonds of Haitians are extremely strong. In addition any kind of schooling is culturally valued extremely highly. Parents perceive it as good for role modeling that their children see them in a learning situation. Clearly there are some other cultures with which this would not be as successful, however, we recommend it for consideration.

Counseling

Whereas counseling in the New York urban area has gone much as we expected and generally unremarkable, the counseling in the migrant program took on some connotations which while unexpected in our initial planning in retrospect do seem reasonable. In many migrant labor situations there is a type of war that is constantly ongoing. Various governmental agencies, unions, and socially

inclined individuals are trying to change the system to improve what are incredibly bad conditions among migrant laborers in America. As such they pose a potential economic threat to the growers. The growers in turn are constantly trying to "fend off" the assaults of the other forces who, in their view, would not only destroy their businesses, but also make the whole operation so unprofitable there would be no jobs for anyone. The project staff tended to be viewed as neutral parties. And as such ended up with a great deal of currency and influence with all concerned that even the governmental agencies did not have. In one instance project staff received a phone call from a grower asking them to come out and mediate a sit down strike on the part of the Haitians. While this was perhaps an expansive view of counseling, our staff was able to determine that one of the crew chief's wives had actually been trying to cheat the workers by holding back some of their pay. (Haitians, even when illiterate, tend to have relatively good arithmatic skills, especially when it comes to money.) With everyone being emotional and irate, it was havoc for non-Creole speaking people to ascertain just what the problem was. When we did intervene, the grower saw to it that the proper monies were restored, the workers was satisfied and went back to work. In another instance students in one of the classes raised the issue in class that their portable toilet in their quarters was not functioning. The associated coordinator of our program wrote a short note to the grower indicating that this matter had come up and he was sure that the grower would want to know that he had a nonfunctioning toilet. The toilet was fixed the day after the note was delivered.

We cannot emphasize enough the importance of the role of the instructional and counseling staff in a migrant situation. The sensitivity, tact, understanding, forebearance, and commitment that is required is truly extraordinary to meet the demands of an exceptional environment.

Program Graduation

As I deliver this paper, we are beginning to encounter a new and unexpected difficulty. Our English classes have taken up a substantial part of our students' lives over these months. Comraderie and esprit de corps has been established with their fellow classmates. Indeed, the way we have structured the classes they

have become a type of social event. Young men and women meet at the classes, while mature adults form friendships with other couples. Business is conducted as items of furniture are traded and people help each other to find jobs. The atmosphere is extremely warm and enjoyable. As a result, our students are not anxious to leave even when they have mastered sufficient English skills that they really no longer ought to be in the program. We are presently working on numerous solutions to this problem and hope to be able to report them at any subsequent meetings we might have. Our initial incentives consistent of a printed graduation certificate and access to high school equivalency programs.

Until then these have been the highlights of our experience.